Gentlemen —

So long interval has elaps'd since the Hall in which we are now assembled, was consecrated to the service of our Science. Time has not however lessen'd the intensity of the interest awaken'd, at the period of its dedication, in the bosoms of those who then, pledg'd themselves to the faithfull performance of every duty, impos'd on them by their ~~Profession to which they had devoted the labour of their lives.~~ — No one among them, can therefore come forward, at this time, to redeem his portion of the common pledge; without feeling deeply conscious of the high responsibility he has assum'd — Nor can any one of them, be more sensible of its weight and magnitude, than the individual, who, in the name of his Colleagues, made the first public declaration of its assumption — To him, however, it is a peculiar pleasure to reflect, that since the avowal was made of the objects and determinations, of those with whom he was united, the first have been steadily pursued, and the last as closely adher'd to, as the circumstances of the Institution here founded would admit. — The poor have been relieved — the Student has been supplied with the means of acquiring practical information, at the bed-side of the sick, and all the necessary preparations have been made, for the future relief of the one, and the more complete instruction of the other. — Thus far therefore, we have already redeem'd our pledge — How far has this been done, in the promis'd promotion of peace and harmony among our professional Brethren? — We answer, without fear of contradiction, that all offensive acts have been abstained from on our part, and the commission of them by others passed over with silent indifference

that while we have uniformly ~~resisted~~ resisted every attempt to elevate the Quack and the Charlatan, above their proper level, we have rather expressed our pity than our indignation, against those who have been duped into their ignoble service, and that we now as cheerfully as ever, extend the hand of Fellowship to every honourable member of our profession. But let it not be thought, that we so far repose confidence in the course we have pursued, as to imagine for a moment, that we have by its means, brought about uniformity of sentiment, on the expediency of the enterprize in which we have embarked — The very character of the Assembly to which I am addressing myself compels me to forego a conclusion so unwarrantable — ~~it would be gratifying to our warmest wishes if well grounded.~~ — Even where two or three are met together, we must expect to find opposing sentiments, conflicting feelings, and discordant hopes. — On points of professional, no less than on those of national policy — in matters of Medical, no less than in those of religious investigation must this be the truth — We cannot therefore without the certainty of disappointment — look for unity of opinion, on the propriety of our undertaking among those who are here assembled. — Some of you, having devoted your lives to the daily routine of practice — having feasted on the pleasures which ever flow from the consciousness of having been the ministers of health to the diseased — and having long and securely reposed confidence in the dogmas, and paid your devotions to the usages of past days; may esteem too lightly the interesting enquiries, and the adventurous undertakings of the

present period, and sicken at the thought of the smallest change in the polity of your profession. To such we can have little more to say on this occasion, than to ask of them, to look back on that season of their lives, in which their bosoms burned with manly enthusiasm — when to their aspiring souls no obstacle seemed too great to be surmounted, no competition in which they were engaged, too warmly conducted, no truth too deeply hidden to be revealed by them. to the season in which they thought, and felt and would perhaps have acted, like the younger members of their profession, who now surround them, and who are looking to them for the lights of their wisdom and experience — We feel boldly confident, that such a retrospect, if impartially indulged in, will banish every wish to fasten fetters on our Science, or to bind her form, — growing as it still is, in strength and beauty, — to the rock of prejudice, — merely because that rock has endured for ages. — But there are doubtless individuals among you, who are averse to innovation from motives of a very different character, — Some who pay the voluntary tribute of their homage at the shrine of age and greatness, not because they have themselves grown old or great but because to them, dependence on power is pleasing, and because subserviency to the will of the rich and lofty has been stamp'd upon their minds, and adopted as the law of their lives, from their professional childhood, up to the present period — If there be any such now here, they will carry away with them, our warmest wishes for the successful termination of their subsidiary course,

We with not to wage war, with them, on account of their dependence — for it is voluntary — we pray not for their loving kindness, in return for ours, for the tribute would be forced. — Our path is a straight forward one to honour; and tho' we may never reach the high point to which it leads — we know, that while we continue in it, we shall enjoy the rich blessings of an independence as dear to us in our profession, as our political liberty can be to the warmest patriot who, in the Senate chamber, laughs to scorn the servile minions of the Monarch, or stands on the watch towers of our Nation, to guard against the invasions of allianced Despots. — But we have not come here to deal in declamation, nor to fan the flame of passion, for tho' there may be some among you, who sustain the two characters just alluded to, their number is too small to entitle them to further notice — I cannot indeed cast my eye round me without perceiving, that the assembly to whom I am addressing myself, is composed, almost entirely, of individuals of another, and a better mould — of men who are about to consecrate their lives to the study of our Science — of men whose minds are unshackled, and whose spirits are as free and elastic, as the air that floats aloft the banner, which is to wave over them in their professional march, and which should never bear upon it, any other inscription, than the tripple pas to fame in Medicine Virtue, Honour and Independence —

To such, it would be doing gross injustice to occupy their time on this or any other occasion in an idle waste of words